THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR

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"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." GALATIANS 5: 1.

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THE DESTINY OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS*

MELVIN J. BALLARD

OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE

I DESIRE to read a portion of the 86th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the same being a communication from the Lord Jesus Christ to the Prophet Joseph Smith,—and the address is made to all the Saints and Elders of the Church.

The Lord admonishes the Latter-day Saints to have faith and confidence in the former promises made by the prophets of old and gives us an assurance that we are living in a day when these great and precious promises are to be fulfilled; and the language which I now quote is as follows:

"Therefore, thus saith the Lord unto you, with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers—

"For ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God—

"Therefore your life and the priesthood have remained, and must needs remain through you and your lineage until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began.

"Therefore, blessed are ye if ye continue in my goodness, a light unto the Gentiles, and through this priesthood, a saviour unto my people Israel. The Lord hath said it."

How great and wonderful is this promise, that through this Church and this Priesthood shall be restored ultimately all that has been predicted and prophesied concerning the great things God would do for men, and that these things are to be fulfilled

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and realised in our time. The Latter-day Saints are a people with a mission and a destiny, and we have not forgotten, I am sure, by the presence of this vast assembly, that we are still pursuing our destiny. We did not aspire to it, the Lord appointed it unto us, and the fulfillment of these promises surely can be realised in the Lord's own due time, and through His providing.

Three things seem to me to be essential in the accomplishment of these wonderful promises: The Lord must have the right kind of people to do His work, He must have them in the right place, and they must have the right plan. I said the Latter-day Saints are a people with a mission, they are entitled to that mission.

I was thrilled not long ago when I read an article appearing in one of our national magazines. The author was discussing the question: "Are the Jews the Chosen People of God?" He denied them the right to claim for themselves and their posterity all the blessings pronounced upon all the sons of Jacob, but limited their blessings to their own particular line—the tribe of Judah. After tracing the history of the Jews and the several tribes of Israel the author concludes: "If we could find in the earth somewhere to-day the descendants of Joseph, we would find the chosen people of God," because the blessings of Joseph were so much greater than the blessings of his brethren that you will recall they despised him and were jealous of his blessings, and sold him into Egypt; but the Lord was with him and raised him up and made him mighty to become the deliverer of his father's household. I say, when I read that statement my soul thrilled with a new sensation of gratitude to God that I live to see the day when Joseph's children are being gathered again, and realise that the Latter-day Saints are of Joseph, children of his favoured son, Ephraim, gathered "one of a city and two of a family," a few from the midst of the nations of the earth, whither they have been scattered, and brought to the land of Zion. The Lord has selected and picked them. They were chosen spirits before they were born. He knew them in the spirit world. He held them in reserve to come forth at the right time.

He has brought them to the right place. Joseph's blessings were to obtain above the blessings of his progenitors, even to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills. It is no chance circumstance that we are here. Notwithstanding all the drivings, the sorrows and distresses, at Nauvoo and Missouri, the difficulties in gathering the Saints from the Old World—these were but God's providences in gathering his people to the right place.

I was deeply impressed with the statement made not long since by a man who has been gathering statistics of an eminent character, wherein he calls attention to the fact that while the United States is but seven per cent of the world's land, and has but six per cent of the world's population, nearly one-half of the world's natural wealth is in the United States of America. This surely

is a chosen land above all other lands. And then, as I thought of our habitations in these mountains, I felt a confidence in the statement that taking a survey two hundred miles from this city in either direction, and circumscribing a district within that radius, there may be found more natural wealth than in any other like territory in any other portion of this choice land. We are not only in the right nation, we are in the right part of that nation.

I used to think about it while labouring as a missionary in the Northwest, for there was some thought, evidently, in the mind of the Prophet at one time that he might go to the northwest country, for he offered the services of the Latter-day Saint men to man the military posts along the old Oregon Trail. He said, "we can render this service cheaper than any one else since we expect to be in that country when we have concluded our service for the government." But the measure was defeated. You remember the discussion brought out the statement of Daniel Webster to this effect: "What do we want with this vast wilderness of shifting sands and cacti, prairie dogs," etc. He said he would not vote one dollar from the public treasury to bring the Pacific Coast one mile nearer Boston than it was at that time. And another senator said in the same discussion that he would not give a pinch of snuff for all the Rocky Mountain country. And yet it was through the inspiration of the Almighty that the Prophet Joseph Smith, almost at that time, said that the Saints would continue to suffer and be driven to these mountains, and many should live to see them become a mighty people. God's providence has been over the gathering of the Latter-day Saints to this place. This is yet the place for the Latter-day Saints.

A very significant thing is that as you read the history of the past, the peoples who have survived have been the owners of the soil and the tillers of the land, and the keepers of flocks. By natural inclination it is the occupation of the majority of the Latter-day Saints; indeed, it was the natural occupation of the majority of the children of Israel in ancient times, to be the tillers of the soil and the keepers of flocks. While you Latter-day Saint brethren on the farms have had a trying time, be ye patient and do not desert the very foundation of our independence in this country—the farm. Better days for you will come if you can weather the storm, and you will preserve not only for yourselves but for the Church a permanency that is essential in working out this great problem. We are in the right place, and yet while this vast wealth may be here it is not easily accessible and can only be had with much labour, much patience and persistence. I doubt if there is another section in all the world that would call forth more physical strength, greater faith, patience and endurance, with a long-range vision of waiting and labouring to reach the destiny, than in these Rocky Mountains. Lofty

mountains, an inspiration! Clear streams of water, health-giving! Pure air, every setting is here to develop the finest physical race that has ever graced this footstool of God. The Lord brought the Latter-day Saints to the right place, and we are engaged in the right business to make us the kind of people the Lord wants us to be.

And then we have the plan revealed, as you heard this morning from our President by the visitation of no less a personage than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. It is His plan, and it contemplates a solution of every problem that now vexes this distressed world. The Lord saw the needs of this hour, 1924, more than a hundred years ago, and He provided for it a plan, and those who follow it shall survive, and those who do not accept the plan shall be shaken; for this is a time when all that can be shaken will be shaken, and that shall stand which God has planned. I said that the plan contemplates a solution of all the problems that now vex us, and I am thinking of political problems. I thought of it this morning as one of the brethren was speaking. I shall not be surprised if this shall be the last national campaign that we shall conduct in this country with the two great parties that have so long obtained here, arrayed one against the other. I tell you that the day is coming that the Prophet Joseph Smith predicted, when the Constitution shall be in peril, when it shall be necessary for the men of all parties who stand for the Constitution and law and order, to stand together, or this thing that we hold sacred and dear, that our fathers established, cannot be preserved. Now the Latter-day Saints, by reason of the fact that they have been taught that God established the Constitution of the United States, adhere to it as earnestly and devotedly as to any of our principles of faith and belief. By reason of the training we have received we are on the side of the Constitution, on the side of law, on the side of order. In the training and discipline that has come to us in the keeping of the Word of Wisdom, in the payment of our tithes and offerings, God was but preparing us to meet the emergencies of this hour. It is His plan, and we shall succeed if we adhere to it, being led successfully through all the difficulties, and directed safely to that goal and haven, our natural heritage, the realisation of all these sacred promises that have been made by all the prophets since the world began.

I tell you Latter-day Saints, however, that we need to adhere to our standards as never before in the history of this Church, because sin is rampant. Self-indulgence is the key word of the hour in the world, and I confess that I tremble and fear when I see the things that men boast of as the evidence of our high civilisation, being really the very things that brought the ruin and the destruction of empires that have long since perished. I say it is a time when we need to adhere to our standards, to protect ourselves against the waves of sin and im-

morality that shall come in from the world. And yet I have no fear, if we shall be true to His plan, for in it is our redemption and our salvation.

I am grateful that we not only have the plan, but we have an inspired consulting engineer, an inspired man who can and does receive from time to time, the word of the Lord for this people in interpreting that plan, so that we never come to difficulties in understanding the plan. If we are in doubt, we know where to go, and we do receive the continual inspiration of the Lord for the government and guidance of His people. Behold, the plan is unfolding under the guidance of God's inspired servants. And each hour shall find God's provision adequate for that hour's need, if this people shall only listen to the voice of the servants of the Lord, whom He has appointed to lead and guide and interpret His plan and purpose. Through obedience I am as sure as that I live that we shall see realised and fulfilled all of these wonderful things that the Lord has promised shall come. Though exiled, as many have been, driven from their homes, and much like Joseph, if not sold into Egypt, banished into the wilderness where it was thought they might perish, yet that which happened to Joseph shall yet happen to His Saints in latter days. Into the place God has led us, under the training He has given us, under the plan He has provided, He is preparing this people to become the saviours of the whole house of Israel, not to feed them physical bread, but the bread of life, that will be more essential and necessary for the world's salvation and preservation than any other kind of bread. These things I am as sure as that I live shall come.

I pray God to bless us, that we shall keep the vision of it before us and be working towards it, and see the practical things that we have been given in each of these commandments the Lord has revealed for the government and guidance of our own lives. It is after all a bigger thing than merely yielding obedience to the Lord's wishes; for He must have had an object, and that object is to fit and prepare us to meet the emergencies of this hour, to succeed in weathering the storms, and to come through—the salt of the earth, the light of the world! The power to do it is here—not only the plan, but the power and right to execute it in the bestowal upon men of the holy Priesthood.

God bless the Priesthood and His Church for the comfort and salvation of all flesh. May God speed the day that we shall be prepared to take those steps. The Lord is waiting for this people, and for the world to bring to pass His righteous purposes, and if we shall prepare ourselves, He is ready and willing to lead us to our glorious destiny! May He grant it unto us who now live, if not in our day, in the day of our children, or our children's children—but it shall come; whether to me, whether to you, I cannot say, but it will come to those who are true to the truth! Many may

fall away, lose the faith, but those who stand true and faithful shall be victorious, and they shall be the recipients of all these great things. God speed that day I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE MARVELOUS WORK AND WONDER

ORSON F. WHITNEY
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE

(*Concluded from page 37*).

SUPPOSE WE SHOULD open the Bible at the first chapter of St. John, and read: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, . . . and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory." And then read a little farther on: "No man hath seen God at any time." Who can interpret that? Evidently "the Word" means our Saviour, in whom dwelt "the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He was God in the flesh, and men saw Him; and yet John says, or is made to say: "No man hath seen God at any time." Who can explain the apparent contradiction?

True, it might be shown that when John said: "No man hath seen God at any time," he was referring, not to the Son of God, but to God the Father. This is evident from the text (1:14, 18). But even here the same difficulty arises; for Adam had seen God, Enoch had walked with Him, and He had appeared to Abraham, Moses, Aaron, and others, long before "the Word was made flesh." Joseph Smith saw both the Father and the Son, but the wise world rejects his testimony, and most believers in the Bible adhere to the dead letter of John's declaration (which may or may not have been correctly transmitted), unheeding the divine admonition: "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

One of our "Mormon" boys out on a mission was confronted with this question. He had just been preaching that the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith, when a voice rang out: "No man hath seen God at any time." The boy had his wits about him. "Of course not," said he, "God is a business man—you can't see Him at *any* time; you have to make a special appointment with Him." (Laughter). He answered a fool according to his folly, but that of course is not the explanation.

Read the Book of Moses. That mighty man of God had an experience of which Joseph Smith's was almost the exact counterpart. He wrestled with Satan, and was delivered from darkness. He saw God, and tells how he saw Him, in these words:

"Now mine own eyes have beheld God; but not my natural, but my spiritual eyes, for my natural eyes could not have beheld;

for I should have withered and died in His presence; but his glory was upon me; and I beheld his face, for I was transfigured before him."

That is what John meant when he said: "No man hath seen God at any time." And that is what Paul meant, in saying: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard." It means that no man with his natural eyes can see God in His glory. He must use his spirit eyes, the eyes with which he "walked by sight" when a spirit in the spirit world, the eyes that he saw with before coming to earth and receiving his natural eyes. In the second estate, where we "walk by faith," we are not permitted to use at all times our spirit sight. But now and then the Lord chooses one from among men, and gives him that privilege. The power of God comes upon such a one, transfigures him, opens his spirit eyes, and constitutes him a seer in the highest sense of the term. Such a man was Moses. Such a man was the brother of Jared, such a man was Nephi, and such a man was Joseph Smith. There have been many such men. They have seen God actually, literally, but it was with their spiritual and not with their natural eyes. "The natural man is an enemy to God;" the natural eye cannot behold Him, the natural ear cannot hear Him. But the spirit eye can behold Him, and the spirit ear can hear Him. With the Spirit of the Lord upon us, we can see and comprehend God, so far as He chooses to make Himself known. This is the great differentiating feature between the Latter-day Saints and those who have not received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

God grant us the power to retain this precious gift, which comprehends all things, which explains the past, the present and the future, shows us where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going when we leave this life, making manifest the things of God, both of time and of eternity. May we keep the fire burning, the lamp lit, which the Lord has lighted within us, to lead and guide us into all truth. Amen.

THREE THINGS

Know this, ye restless denizens of earth,
Know this, ye seekers after joy and mirth,
Three things there are, eternal in their worth:

Love that outreaches to the humblest things;
Work that is glad, in what it does and brings;
And Faith that soars upon unwearied wings.

Divine the Powers that on this trio wait,
Supreme their conquest over Time and Fate;
Love, Work, and Faith—these three alone are great.

—Anon.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR

JAMES E. TALMAGE, Editor

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 1925

EDITORIAL

THE GREAT EMANCIPATOR

TO EMANCIPATE is to set free from servitude; to liberate from restraint or bondage of any kind; so say the dictionaries. The very words used in the heading of this article have been applied as a title of distinction and honour to Abraham Lincoln, the great statesman, who as President of the United States freed the Negroes of the Southern States from what had become an insufferable condition of serfdom. His name is held in deserved esteem, not only by the coloured race to whom he was a deliverer from bondage, but also by the freeborn who recognise the greatness and the nobility of his achievement.

One must see and know the actual conditions of slavery to adequately realise the horror and degradation of it all. Yet some there are who deliberately choose servitude rather than freedom; and though deliverance from their self-imposed bondage be offered they prefer to remain as they are, slaves!

As a sequel to one of our Lord's most impressive and exalting sermons, we are told that: "As He spake these words, many believed on Him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." See John 8: 30-32. Strange to say, this inviting promise gave such offense to the multitude of veritable serfs who heard it that they became enraged and tried to kill the One whose purpose it was to give them freedom.

They were offended at the imputation that they were not already free: "We be Abraham's seed," they cried, "and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" Had they forgotten the bondage of Egypt, the Assyrian and the Babylonian captivities, and their then existing state of vassalage to Imperial Rome? Truly so; and yet worse, they seemed utterly oblivious to the fact that both individually and as a people they were under the dominating tyranny of false tradition and conventional sins.

The day of self-righteous misconception is not wholly of the past. Modern circumstances and present instances are abundant. A great proportion of people who call themselves civilised are

voluntarily and eagerly going into slavery, and grovel in the debasement of ignoble bondage. What think you of the man or woman who can carry on the usual work with difficulty only, if at all, when circumstances withhold the morning coffee or the usual cup of tea in the afternoon? What of the man who is rendered incapable if his pipe or dram be denied him? Are such people free?

The argument that we are creatures of bodily needs, which must be supplied, is not in point. Food we must have, both for the development of energy, and for the sustenance of the ever-changing tissues; but as to nutriment there is more in a mouthful of bread and butter than in all the plain tea or black coffee that a heavy user would consume in a day, No, it is not the healthful craving for food that leads to the poisoning of the human system with tea, coffee, tobacco or alcoholic drinks. It is the stimulant appetite by which men become enslaved; and when once subjected they serve their master with a devotion born of the fear of the whip or goad.

From these and every other form of servitude the truth, which is the great emancipator, will set men free, if they will only be freed. The word of God, which is the truth, affirms that the use of stimulants such as those mentioned herein is not good for the body; and human experience manifested in debilitated bodies, enervated minds, curtailed powers of spirit, abnormal emotions, evil passions, general wretchedness and impoverishment demonstrate the truth of the divine affirmation.

Latter-day Saints, are ye free men or slaves? These bodies have been given us in this mortal field of endeavour, for the service to which unembodied spirits are not adapted; and though each of us shall have to lay aside his body for a time, he shall take it up again, and will find that in its very tissues are engraved, as on imperishable plates of gold, the record of his indulgences and a true account of efficiency or lack of it with full specification of the cause thereof.

To those who are enthralled the truth beckons with an invitation to liberty and life in its truest sense. Come, learn the truth; and be free!—J. E. T.

THE FORM in which truth first utters itself has a power which no subsequent repetition can equal. There is a kind of work that can be done only once. The first discoverer or announcer of any truth stands in a relation to it which no other can ever fill. Many investigators have crossed the sea, but there is only one Columbus. Many astronomers have searched the heavens, but there has been no second Newton.—CHARLES CARROLL EVERETT.

WHAT IS "MORMONISM"?*

JAMES E. TALMAGE
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE

IT SHOULD BE KNOWN that the term "Mormon," with its several derivates and cognates, is a misnomer applied to the Church and its people very early in the history of their organisation. The pseudonym has reference to the Book of Mormon, a volume that was first issued from the press about the time of the organisation of the Church as a body corporate in the United States. The true and official title of this religious body is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Concerning the Book of Mormon, much misapprehension exists in the minds of those who have heard about it but know little of it. By the way, the vagrant rumour occasionally reaches my ears that this book is intended for the initiated only, and that non-members can procure copies only through misrepresentation or bribery. The facts are that the Book of Mormon has been published in most of the civilised languages of the globe, and in many of the tongues that are prevalent on the isolated islands of the sea. The book is sold at a price as near the actual cost as possible, and every proper method is used to facilitate its distribution. The Church does not seek to make profit out of its sale. During the last few months copies of the Book of Mormon have been placed in many of the large libraries of Great Britain; and it is pleasing to be able to announce that any public library or any community reading-room will be supplied with a copy for the asking.

The Book of Mormon is primarily a history of the aboriginal peoples of the American continent. Mainly it is a sacred history, dealing more particularly with the teachings of the ancient prophets than with the rise and fall of rulers; though enough of the secular record is presented to properly connect up the important events in chronological order.

Far from this book being the "Mormon Bible," as some people have been led to think, it is in no sense a substitute for the Holy Bible of Christendom. The Latter-day Saints know but one Bible, specifically so-called, and that is the Bible itself, comprising the Old and the New Testaments. We quote from the Authorised Version, otherwise known as the King James Version, and we preferably use the Oxford and Cambridge issues.

However, the Book of Mormon is Scripture; it gives an account of the dealings of God with the people on the Western Continent, even as the Holy Bible gives a similar account with respect to the

*Address given, by invitation, at the Sheffield Educational Settlement, Sheffield, Sunday evening, January 11, 1925.

peoples on the Eastern Continent. Far from there being any antagonism between the two, the Book of Mormon supports the Bible in all matters of common record. Briefly stated, the Book of Mormon tells of the departure of a colony of Jews from Jerusalem in the year 600 B.C., and this by divine direction. It describes their journeying to the coast of the Arabian Sea, their building and provisioning a vessel, their crossing of the ocean under the guiding hand of God, their landing on the shores now known as America, their prosperity and development in the West, their division into factions which developed into two opposing nations known as Nephites and Lamanites, and the ultimate destruction of one of these nations.

But the book is more than a chronicle of even such great events as these. All through the period covered by its account, approximately one thousand years, divinely-commissioned prophets received revelations from the heavens and gave them unto the people, as did Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Malachi, and others on the Eastern Hemisphere. For six centuries from the time of the exodus from Jerusalem the prophets told of the promised advent of the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh, and described with circumstantial detail the incidents of His predicted birth, ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection from the tomb; and with these predictions was associated another, to the effect that the Resurrected Lord would manifest Himself in person among the Nephites.

The sacred record avers that at the specified time the crucified and resurrected Saviour did appear in Person, proclaiming Himself, showing unto the people His precious hands and feet, and giving unto them the Gospel, by which the outward forms of the Law of Moses were superseded. The Lord established His Church among the Nephites, calling and ordaining twelve men, like unto the Apostles of the East and prescribing the same requirements and conditions as He had taught while in a state of mortality in Judea, Samaria and Galilee.

Thus the Book of Mormon stands as an additional witness to the Christ; and that this witness might be established appears as the main purpose of the divine plan in sequestering an independent people on a continent then unknown to the world at large.

The main objection to the acceptance of the Book of Mormon for what it purports to be lies in what is regarded as a mystery concerning its origin. The translator of the ancient records, Joseph Smith, whose name is known by good or evil report amongst all nations, solemnly avowed that he was visited by an angel, who announced himself as Moroni, the last of the ancient scribes who had engraved the history of the people upon the plates of metal, who had buried them in the earth about the year 420 A. D., and who came in 1823 to the latter-day Prophet as a resurrected being.

Were I asked to specify some one feature or characteristic by which the theology or doctrines taught by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is most clearly distinguished from the teachings of most Christian sects, I should name their belief in the reality of latter-day communication from God to man. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon is an illustration of such divine revelation. Why should it be deemed impossible for God to communicate through His prophets to-day as He did in ancient times? The spirit of the present age is that of continued revelation. We live in the very atmosphere of expectancy. In a broad sense what we call here discovery or invention is on the other side a revelation unto man. But in the specific sense, that of direct communication from the heavens, by which divine direction is given as of old, continued revelation is a present-day actuality.

The first revelation given in the current dispensation was a restoration of the knowledge that had once existed upon the earth but had been lost, respecting the personality of God. Joseph Smith bore solemn witness to the world, that in the year 1820 the Eternal Father and His Son Jesus Christ did reveal themselves unto him; and that he knew from personal experience that those two Personages were separate and distinct individuals, after whose form and image man had been created. In the light of further revelation, this prophet of the last days taught that the spirit of man is literally the offspring of God; that we have been born in the lineage of Deity; and that by the operation of the accepted laws of heredity it is possible for man to advance in righteousness so that, sometime in the eternities to come, he may actually attain to the exalted condition of Godhood.

A connected truth is that man is essentially eternal. Modern revelation has made plain the fact that we lived before we were born into mortality. Individuality is everlasting. You were you and I was I before we assumed bodies of flesh and blood; moreover, you will be yourself and I shall be myself through and beyond the change we call death. We recognise four distinct stages of progression:

(1) The unembodied state, in which our spirits lived as individual intelligences, endowed with the powers of action and the capacity to choose.

(2) The embodied state, that in which we now find ourselves, our immortal spirits tabernacled in bodies composed of the elements of this earth.

(3) The disembodied state, brought about by death, whereby the spirit leaves the body, which latter belongs to this earth and is left behind while the spirit continues to live.

(4) The reembodied state, which is brought about by a literal resurrection from the dead, whereby the spirit takes upon itself again the body of flesh and bones, never to be separated therefrom.

We may further designate these stages or states as (1) the unborn; (2) the born; (3) the dead; (4) the resurrected.

Through and by latter-day revelation, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in all its ancient purity and with all its inherent powers, has been restored to the earth; and the embodiment of that Gospel, that is the Church of Jesus Christ, has been reestablished upon the earth, and all this in strict accordance with the predictions of the Lord and of His prophets. Did not John, the Apostle-Revelator, declare that he had been shown what was to take place in after times, namely, the coming of an angel having the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth, to every kindred, tongue and people? Read studiously and prayerfully Revelation 14: 5, 6, 7.

But, it has been said, there was no need of a restoration in view of the fact that the Christian world has had the Gospel from the ancient apostolic age to the present. True, the Holy Bible has been a common possession, but is the Bible the Gospel? At best the Bible is but a record of the Gospel; and between a written account of a thing and the thing itself there is a radical distinction. By way of illustration: One may read and study with care all that is said in the Holy Bible concerning baptism as an indispensable requirement for salvation; but does that knowledge give to such a one even a semblance of authority to administer the ordinance of baptism? Joseph Smith affirms that unto him and to a companion in the ministry, came an angel who announced himself as John, known of old as the Baptist; and that this being laid his hands upon the heads of the two mortal men and did ordain them to the requisite degree of priesthood, by which they were authorised and commanded to baptise believing and repentant applicants. As showing the order by which authority is exercised, John the Baptist informed the two that he was acting under commission and instruction from the presiding three of the ancient Twelve, namely Peter, James and John.

Joseph Smith and his associate, Oliver Cowdery, further affirm that the three Apostles named did also manifest themselves and ordain those two men to the Holy Apostleship, with commission to preach the restored Gospel, to organise the Church of Jesus Christ upon the earth anew, and to build up that Church by promulgating the Gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

As directed, these men brought about the organisation of the Church; and as inspired or specifically instructed from time to time, they called other men and ordained them to graded offices in the Holy Priesthood. Thus it is that every man bearing that Priesthood in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can readily follow the line of authority and trace his ordination to Joseph Smith, the Latter-day Prophet and Revelator, who, as stated, was ordained to the Lesser, or Aaronic, Priesthood, by

the one who held the presidency of that Priesthood in ancient times, namely, John the Baptist; and the Higher, or Melchizedek, Priesthood, by Peter, James and John, who were the presiding Apostles in the days following the personal ministry of our Lord the Christ by whom those three were ordained.

It is thus made obvious that this Church has something new to offer to the world. It professes to speak with authority and not as the scribes who derive their commission from institutions established on human initiative. The Church affirms that even as the Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles foretold, there was a great falling away, or universal apostasy from the Church as established by Jesus Christ, and that the Holy Priesthood ceased to be operative upon the earth. We appeal to history as vindicating the predictions of these ancient men of God; and we point to the fact that competent authority in the present age has not only admitted but positively avowed the awful fact of this universal declension. The Church of England attests the fact in her Book of Homilies, first published about the middle of the sixteenth century and retained unto this day as an official publication, "Appointed to be Read in Churches" as occasion may require in place of sermons. In Homily XIV, designated as the "Homily against Peril of Idolatry," the Church of England said and says:

"So that laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees of men, women, and children of whole Christendom—an horrible and most dreadful thing to think—have been at once drowned in abominable idolatry; of all other vices most detested of God, and most damnable to man; and that by the space of eight hundred years and more."

With the world in such a condition of spiritual darkness there had to be a restoration of light; and we proclaim that this restoration, foreseen and foretold, has been effected. We offer no new Gospel, but proclaim the glad tidings of the old one, the eternal one, come again. The conditions of membership in the Church today, which are the requirements of citizenship in the Kingdom of God, are identical with those taught of old; and these comprise as first or fundamental principles the following:

1. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the one and only Redeemer and Saviour of the race. This embraces faith in the entire Godhead or Holy Trinity, the Eternal Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost; these being distinct personages but one in purpose and method.

2. Repentance of sin. This comprises a genuine sorrow for past transgressions, and a resolute endeavour to seek divine assistance in avoiding sin, in resisting temptation, and in a determined effort to live in accordance with the laws of individual purity and righteousness.

3. Baptism by immersion, at the hands of one having authority

to administer that holy ordinance, whereby, as the Lord has promised, He will grant remission of sins.

4. The imposition of hands by those duly authorised by ordination to officiate, for the bestowal of the right and title to the companionship of the Holy Ghost.

These indispensable conditions, these absolute requirements, are no mere prescriptions of men, but are specifically set forth and laid down by the Author of the plan of salvation.

In this practical age we naturally ask for a showing of results in connection with the operation of any plan or system. The following are a few of the fruits of "Mormonism":

1. A system of church organisation unknown since the disintegration of the Primitive Church through apostasy. This organisation comprises all the essential offices and officers of the olden Church—apostles, high priests, seventies, elders, bishops, priests, teachers, deacons. The religion of "Mormonism" is practical, dealing with the spiritual it is true, but also in a prominent degree with the essentials of every-day life.

2. A missionary system whereby the Gospel message is proclaimed throughout the world. The missionaries of the Church labour in their appointed fields without remuneration, bearing their own expenses except so far as they may be assisted by the voluntary generosity of those amongst whom they minister.

3. An organisation not dependent upon the capricious giving of a wealthy few, but supported by the law of the tithe, and by free-will offerings for the assistance of the worthy poor.

4. Auxiliary associations, which are conducted as helps in the government of the Church. Among these are the Relief Society, the Sunday School, the Young Men's and Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association, the Primary Association for children, and Religion Classes, whereby the secular instruction of the schools is supplemented by training in the duties of a truly religious life.

5. A community in which individual chastity and virtue are counted of higher worth than life itself; and a marriage system, which, while in strict accord with the laws of the land, provides for the continuation of family relationship beyond the grave, and thus solemnises the union of man and woman not *until death doth them part*, but *for time and for all eternity*.

6. A community whose vital statistics, in comparison with those of Great Britain or the United States, show a much higher average age at death, in other words prolonged life, a high birth rate, low death rate, high marriage rate, few divorces, and a very low rate of infant mortality.

7. A people whose industry, thrift and prosperity are proverbial. They have shown their ability to conquer the desert, and to establish homes. Official records show that in "Mormon"

communities over 75 per cent. of the members own the homes in which they dwell.

I bear to you solemn witness that nowhere can be found a people amongst whom sexual purity is held in higher esteem, or is more strictly demanded of its members, than the Latter-day Saints.

"Mormonism" then is a religious system embodying the Gospel of Jesus Christ as taught in earlier dispensations, and essentially based upon the restoration of that Gospel with all its inherent powers and privileges in this the dispensation of the last days. It provides for the temporal as well as the spiritual salvation of humankind, and teaches that morality is a privilege and a boon, as thereby is gained the experience without which eternal advancement would be impossible. Its message to the world is one of good tidings and cheer, coupled nevertheless with positive warning of predicted judgments that shall surely overtake men and nations except they repent and turn unto God. It stoutly defends the right of freedom in worship according to the dictates of the individual conscience, the while enjoying all rational toleration of religious belief and practice.

It voices a persuasive but authoritative call to repentance, and invites all mankind to come in through the portal of baptism while yet there is time, and participate in the blessings assured. It proclaims the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ to be near at hand, and summons the world to prepare for His glorious coming.

DEATH

Biggs—Sister Ellen Biggs of Varteg (Welsh Conference) died December 22, 1924. Deceased was born at Blania, Monmouthshire, in 1841, and was baptised and confirmed in July, 1866, by Elder T. Willet. Sister Biggs was a true missionary in her community and a constant supporter of truth and righteousness. She leaves a noble posterity who honour this wonderful mother and friend. Funeral services were held December 21, at the home and in the Wesleyan Chapel, under the direction of President Lewis F. Hansen. The speakers at the services were President Lewis F. Hansen, Brother R. Thomas and Elders Allen C. Reynolds and Charles L. Johnson. Elder Gordon Burt Affleck dedicated the grave.

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